

Submitted herewith is a Submission Of Marked Up Claims in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c)(1)(ii).

The rejection of Claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph is respectfully traversed.

Claim 4 has been amended to recite a bolt bore seat. Applicant submits that this is the same structural limitation referred to as "a plurality of bore seats" in line 18 of Claim 1. Accordingly Claim 4 is submitted to be definite and particularly points out and distinctly claims the subject matter which the Applicant regards as his invention.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully requests that the Section 112 rejection of Claim 4 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 7-11 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Chaix et al. is respectfully traversed.

Chaix et al. describe a pipe joining apparatus that includes retractable bearing members. The apparatus includes a ring 20 and bearing members 22 positioned within the ring. The bearing members are pivotally connected to the ring by a bearing member tongue 30 inserted between two caps 32,24 mounted on a lateral face of the ring with a spindle 36 placed in aligned holes in the tongue and the caps. The bearing members include bolt holes 38 for receiving tightening rods. The inner face of the bearing members include a frustum-shaped shoulder 28 which can bear against the frustum-shaped shoulder 12 of the pipe flange.

Claim 7 of the present application recites "a coupling spring ring for coupling a first pipe section flange to second pipe section flange in a nuclear reactor . . . said spring ring comprising: a body having a first surface and an opposing second surface, said body comprising a main bore

and a plurality of bolt bores extending therethrough . . . a plurality of pivot bearings extending from said first surface, each said pivot bearing configured to engage a pipe section flange notch; and a plurality of bolt bore seats located in said second surface and coaxially aligned with said bolt bores.

Chaix et al. do not describe nor suggest a coupling spring ring as recited in Claim 7. Particularly, Chaix et al. do not describe nor suggest a body that includes a main bore and a plurality of bolt bores extending therethrough and a plurality of pivot bearings extending from the first surface of the body. Rather, Chaix et al. describe an apparatus that includes a ring or body 22 and a plurality of bearing members pivotally attached to the ring. The ring does not include a plurality of bolt bores nor a plurality of pivot bearings extending from a surface of the ring. The apparatus described by Chaix et al. has a frustum-shaped shoulder on the bearing members, but this frustum-shaped shoulder does not extend from a surface of the ring. Also the apparatus described by Chaix et al. includes bolt openings in the bearing members, but these bolt openings do not extend through the ring. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claim 7 is patentable over Chaix et al.

Claims 8-11 depend from independent Claim 7. When the recitations of dependent Claims 8-11 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 7, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 8-11 likewise are patentable over Chaix et al.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully requests that the Section 102(b) rejection of Claims 7-11 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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PATENT

## IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant: Thompson

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Examiner: D. Bochna

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For: PIPE CONNECTING ASSEMBLY  
AND METHOD OF USE

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## SUBMISSION OF MARKED UP CLAIMS

Commissioner for Patents

P.O. Box 1450

Arlington, VA 22313

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A marked-up version of amended Claim 4, in accordance with 37 C.F.R.

§ 1.121(c)(1)(ii), follows below.

MARKED UP CLAIMS

4. (amended) A pipe coupling assembly in accordance with Claim 3 wherein each said bolt comprises a spherical bearing at each end, said spherical bearings sized to mate with a bolt bore [spherical] seat.

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